



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon, Governor • Sara Parker Pauley, Director

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

www.dnr.mo.gov

March 14, 2016

Mr. Joseph Dandurand
Deputy Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 899
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0899

Dear Mr. Dandurand:

This letter is in response to your letter dated February 29, 2016, that was sent to Missouri Department of Natural Resources' (MDNR) and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) regarding elevated air concentrations of trichloroethylene (TCE) within the Meramec Caverns' Cave Complex.

You asked that the departments of Health and Senior Services and Natural Resources determine whether and to what extent the reported contamination at Meramec Caverns threatens the health of visitors and workers, and to be prepared to share with you any related evidence.

On February 1, 2016, the ATSDR issued a memo to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund Division Director stating that an urgent public health hazard to individuals currently working in the cave still exists and that air concentrations in several settings are such that they may pose a threat to visitors as well.

Recently, the EPA's Superfund Branch, with assistance from MDNR and DHSS, secured a voluntary commitment from the cave owner to temporarily suspend cave tours in order to protect the health of workers and the public. We are pleased with this turn of events and are hopeful that future efforts will mitigate the problems and address all human health issues, thus eventually allowing tours to resume. However, in the event these efforts do not result in acceptable outcomes, we believe the state has sufficient authority to take independent action to protect public health in this situation in the event it becomes necessary.



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Mr. Joseph Dandurand
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We would be happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss our data and evidence related to this contamination, and the options available to the state should the currently planned path toward resolution prove unsuccessful.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara Parker Pauley'.

Sara Parker Pauley
Director

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Lyskowski'.

Peter Lyskowski
Acting Director